FIGHTING TALK

Issue 7 Price £1

BEATING

THE FASCISTS

Anti-Fascist Action

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Police protecting the fascists from an AFA advance on the Little Driver Pub, Bow Road, where they were hiding.

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APPEAL FOR INFORMATION

WE URGE ALL OUR READERS TO SEND ANY INFORMATION ON FASCISTS IN THEIR AREA DIRECT TO AFA. THIS IS THE ONLY WAY TO GUARANTEE THE MILITANT ANTI-FASCIST MOVEMENT HAS THE NECESSARY INFORMATION TO SUCCESSFULLY BEAT THE FASCISTS.

JOIN AFA

In the fight against fascism in Britain, Anti-Fascist Action has a record that is second to none. Our unique combination of physical confrontation and ideological struggle has produced results time and again.
We say no platform for fascists - no meetings, no marches, no paper sales, no leafleting - and we mean it, as the fascists know only too well. Our aim is to cause the maximum disruption to fascist activities.
But that doesn't mean that AFA only needs street-fighters. Far from it. Everyone has a role to play in AFA, whether they feel confident in physical confrontations or not.
None of our successes in physically confronting the fascists would have been possible without the contribution of non-combatants. From legal observers to scouts, from leafleters to people who can write articles or speak at meetings, AFA needs people with a whole range of skills if it is to continue to succeed.

There's a lot to do, so don't wait around. Join today.

Contact your local group for affiliation rates and activities.

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Waterloo Sunset

A FITTING MEMORIAL

As Anti-Fascist Action predicted in our press statement of 10 January 1994, the Blood and Honour concert organised as a tribute to Ian Stuart and planned for January 15 ended as a replay of The Battle of Waterloo (September 1992), this time between Combat 18 stewards and the riot police.

After their first choice venue in Becontree had been rumbled by AFA, Combat 18 directed their supporters to the Wellington (an old British Movement pub from the 80s), near Waterloo station.

Earlier in the day at around 4.30pm, taking advantage of the confusion caused by the Anti-Nazi League and Youth Against Racism in Europe and the concentration of police at Becontree and Barking, one hundred and fifty AFA militants descended unexpectedly on the Little Driver pub in Bow Road, the nerve centre of the fascist operation on the day.

Police managed to stop the AFA advance just yards from the pub, when the fascists scattered as a flare from the advance hit a nearby bridge.

After Waterloo, a major disaster for Blood and Honour, C18 took over security for Blood and Honour events, talking of a 'back to basics' return to secret gigs organised on a word of mouth basis. The events of Saturday 15 January were a disaster in turn for C18 and the 'back to basics' strategy.

Rather than Combat Adolf Hitler, this was more like Combat Arthur Fowler.

The arrival of AFA at the centre of operations caused total panic and confusion, with one of C18's leading activists seeking refuge in the back of a police car.

AFA militants were forced by the police into a sealed train and taken from Bow Road to Earls Court, throwing the rail network into chaos.

Later in the evening, about 8.00pm, the ANL were attacked by the police at Earls Court. In the confusion, AFA re-grouped and re-emerged at 9.30pm at Waterloo, where fascists were attempting to hold their gig. Police later described the ability of AFA to find the opposition as 'uncanny'.

News of the arrival of over one hundred AFA militants in the immediate vicinity caused C18 organisation at the Wellington to internally combust. Initially the fascists wanted to get out, seconds later the riot police smashed their way in. Badly beaten fascists, covered in blood, were dragged faced down from the pub and laid on the pavement. The pub smashed, the gig was cancelled. Fascists attempting to flee the Wellington met a similar fate at the hands of AFA militants in the area.

For C18 and Blood and Honour this has to be seen as a major disaster. For AFA, with all the players - ANL, YRE, C18, Blood and Honour and the Met - in the arena, it was a triumph. It was AFA's intelligence gathering capacity which revealed the redirection points and the planned venues. On the day we controlled the play, were ahead of the game and made all the decisive moves.

THE PHONEY WAR

C18, the self-styled fascist para-military group, continues to fail to live up to its gruesome reputation. While nearly 50,000 anti-fascists wandered aimlessly around South-East London on the Unity Demonstration (October 16th), AFA located the fascists in the Harrow Inn, next to Abbey Wood station, waiting to ambush people on their way home. The fascists retreated into the pub when AFA arrived and were then held there by the police for several hours. And so another cunning plan was ruined - but at least something positive was achieved on the day.

St. Andrew's Day

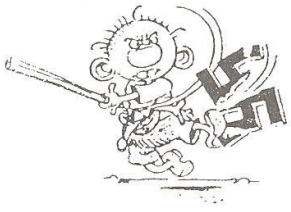
The annual St. Andrews Day march organised by the Scottish Campaign Against Racism and Fascism passed off peacefully this time around. The march has no specific purpose other than being a general protest against racism and fascism, but it normally attracts the attention of the BNP. For this reason AFA mobilises on the day and has scored some notable successes in recent years. This year, despite (or perhaps because of) an excellent turn-out by Scottish AFA activists, the BNP kept out of sight. The fascists were in the area, because three left-wing paper sellers got battered in the city centre earlier that morning, but that was the only evidence on the day.

On the march itself the police refused to allow Celtic fans to march under their banner "Celts Against Fascism" and similarly the Pollock Republican Flute Band were told to take down the Irish tricolour that they traditionally march behind. It is more than odd that on any other day bands can march behind the very same tricolour - but not against fascism.

WANTED

Exeter AFA would like to hear from anyone with information on the Patriotic Forum and the Revolutionary Conservative Caucus, both far-right groups linked to the Tory Party. Send any info to Exeter AFA c/o The Flying Post, PO Box 185, Exeter EX4 4EW

Let's get Physical...



The implementation of a No Platform policy will invariably involve physical confrontation with the fascists. In this issue Fighting Talk's Sid Martell explores the politics of the pavement...

"AFA is committed to fighting Fascism both physically and ideologically. We are not fighting fascism to maintain the status quo but to defend the interests of the working class" *Point 1.4 London AFA constitution.*

Many people beside the state are opposed to AFA's policy of physical confrontation, these range from the fascists (they especially don't like it), the liberal 'state ban' wing of the movement (ARA, Searchlight etc..), all the way to so called revolutionary organisations like the SWP (see the last issue of FT, they might pay lip service to 'taking on the fascists', in reality they can' t implement a No Platform policy and they need the police to function). So, what with all this opposition, is AFA merely being obstinate? Are we just isolated thugs? Or are we principled militant anti-fascists using the best means at our disposal to stop the fascists.

Firstly let's get a few things straight. Anti-Fascist Action is not a terrorist or military organisation, neither are we just a group of thugs who simply enjoy a good row. AFA is a broad based national organisation made up of working class people who are serious about combating fascism. Fighting fascism demands a lot from those who undertake it seriously, the risks are high, the hours are long and mostly spent getting bored - waiting for something to happen, and it doesn't earn you a living. As any committed militant in any struggle will tell you that goes with the territory, nobody asks for thanks or a pat on the back, you just get on with it. What's to a large extent unbeleivable, and yet at the same time so predictable, is that as well as this there are characters in the movement, whose courage and integrity are questionable to say the least, who seem to spend more time slagging off the militants than they do making the minimal (and often detrimental) impact that they do on the fascists.

AFA started when everybody else dropped Anti-Fascism, the real problem of course, being the Tories!? Now that the rest of them have come back on the scene they find that we've not been away, our rag-tag band of directionless cut-throats and thugs managing to stay the distance while the rest of them chose complacency and denial of thier own ineptitude. As well as this they also find that while they run around chasing their tails and getting nowhere, AFA continues to pop up every now and again to remind the fascists that there will always be two sides of the opposition to them.

Throughout this century it seems that anti-fascist militants have had to put up with unwholesome elements at their backs. During Franco's dictatorship after the Spanish Civil War, the words of anarchist anti-fascist guerillas (who were making 'substantial withdrawals' from various financial institutions on behalf of the resistance movement) have a familiar ring...

"Yet some of our so called comrades attempted to defame our conduct in this matter - calling us robbers, bandits, criminals in exactly the same way as our fascist enemies. They do so to justify themselves to our movement for their own cowardice and inactivity."

Even within AFA there have been times when certain elements have called for more 'political' campaigning: when pressed, more 'political' campaigning basically means 'non-violent' protest type campaigning a la ANL. AFA has outlined many times that it has a 'twin-track' policy of both ideological and physical confrontation, what this article aims to make clear is that <u>both</u> parts of our strategy are indeed political. Both are of equal importance, and the balance between them constantly and consistently maintained.

A classic cliche used by all manner of characters, from magistrates to 'revolutionaries', is to confront them physically you are "Just as bad as the fascists". Anti-fascist militants have had this thrown at them since fascism began, the equation being; if you meet violence with violence, then you become what you hate. This oddly Christian moralisation (odd because easily as many people have been killed in the name of Christ, as Mussolini or Hitler) is not just misguided, it's thoroughly out of order. Fascists employ violence as a means to an end, they are not violence personified; to be violent is not to be a fascist. It is what lies behind that violence; virulent hatred of the working class and it's aspirations, that gives fascism it's character.

The aim of fascism is to amplify the violence already inherent in the state; the violence of the Police, Immigration officials, the Army, etc. being just a tea-party to what the fascists would have them do. It is obvious that if working class people are to defend themselves and their interests, they must react in accordance with this threat. Therefore an act of aggression against the fascists must be seen as an act in defence of the working class, and as such be a political act.

The argument that anything other than pure self-defence (for instance defence against attack by an ethnic community) is mindless petty violence with no political motivation holds about as much water as a sieve. The formidable increase in state terror that would arise from a fascist dictatorship is justification enough for the eradication of fascism. The working class is already under attack, the state is already throwing punches, the coming to power of the fascists is the big right-hander, the knock out punch. It's already a question of them or us, the war has already started.

It's interesting here to note just who is saying what as regards this question. The vast majority of anti-fascist militants are working class, not just for the wider abstract reasons outlined above but because they bear the first brunt of the onslaught of fascism, and in the long term they will suffer the worst casualties. If someone in a pub full of local fascists declares themselves an anti-fascist, there won't be much time for formal debate and dissection of analysis. Working class people don't baulk at violence, they are not so conditioned to reject personal/

political violence while condoning institutionalised violence as the middle classes are. It is obvious then that while the middle class orientated wing of the movement call for the police to deal with the "criminal fascist element", people on the street are forced to deal with it themselves.

It is the organisation of this militant working-class resistance to fascism that is the task that AFA has set itself. All of the moves made by AFA are dictated by this aim. The direction of the organisation is orientated by discussion of the militants on the ground, there is no military hierachy governing the politics of the organisation, rather the politics control all AFA stewarding activities. The stewards are at all times answerable to the rest of the organisation, their role is to carry out the wishes of the membership. It is the people active in AFA who have defined this, it is the militants on the ground who argue for political discipline. We would argue against a purely street outfit, not because we are against 'street activity', but because alone it has no meaning. There are many historical examples to draw from this, from the IPLO in Ireland to renegade Zapatistas in the Mexican Revolutions.

If you carry out acts of an 'illegal' nature then you are bound to attract those who simply wish to get involved in that end of affairs, who are not political. It is up to the movement to either educate or reject those elements, and only the backing and guidance of the wider movement can define were the line is drawn, were acts degenerate to the socially criminal rather than the political. It is only when the politics are let go that things are reduced to pure factionalism and criminality, that has never and will never be the case with AFA. All those who have made claims along these lines are either enemies of militant anti-fascism, or the sort of play-pretend 'leaders' who get their fingers burnt when they play with fire.

The need for discipline and organisation then is paramount to us, one because it makes us accountable to ourselves and the movement, and secondly because it makes us a more effective force on the street and in the political arena. There have been times when elements attracted to AFA seem to feel that these things can be dispensed with, those that espouse the anti-fascism of the cider bottle and the wildebeest. While not denying anybody's right to oppose fascism, there is no place for this within AFA. It must be made clear, AFA wins, there aren't any prizes for second place. Without coordination, without experience and back up, little groups marching off here and there will ultimately come a cropper. This is not a game, the fascists mean it, and what has kept AFA effective is that we mean it too.

It's ironic really, that many who have consistently slagged off the physical element of AFA, have at the same time come begging for protection when there's a possibility that they themselves might be attacked by the fascists. AFA has learnt a lot from this, smiles the one day, vilification the next. It has also learnt that being some sort of token police force for the 'left', has gained us nothing but their subsequent whinging afterwards. Or even during, there have been a few occasions when an AFA stewarding outfit has actually had to 'steward', only to meet shock horror from those who most definitely would have been on the receiving end of it from the fascists if we hadn't been there.

Our job is beating the fascists on our terms, our stewards are only jeopardised by our activities, or the ones we sponsor. What many on the 'left' don't realise is that the physical victories of the fascists are worth more than ours because they are in the ascendancy, they are on the offensive while the 'left' stares up it's own backside wondering what day it is. Any victory that we give them on the street is a body blow for us, if we are to be defeated then we'll go down fighting for something to fight for, not for liberals and cowards who can't hold their hands up.

But again that's not to say that we won't work with anyone else, we have stressed time and again that unity is made around activity, not verbal niceties. (See the Unity Article in the last issue of FT). If anybody who adopts the same stance as us, who works in the same arena as us, isn't working alongside us, then could they let us know? The point has to be made, AFA has a job to do, it hasn't the time or the resources to argue the toss about 'United Fronts' and such like. Let's face it, that isn't just fiddling while Rome burns, it's setting up the whole orchestra and giving the audience boxes of matches.

It seems that the calls for Unity tend to be made most vociferously by those who when they had a chance to make some sort of impact, ie; when they were in AFA, chose to abandon that and now wonder in the wilderness calling for "committees" around this and "Unity" around that because it's the only chance they'll get to prove how 'wadical' they are by talking a load of old nonsense. They now find they're in a position where far from "making No Platform mean No Platform", they are effectively more unable to deliver that than they ever were! It's not saying it, it's doing it that counts. AFA continues to do it.

Physical confrontation is not only neccesary, but from a propaganda point of view it's indespensible; Waterloo was a straight go, and an immdediate success. It shows people what can be done, and what has to be done, if fascism is to be beaten back. AFA victories in the North, in Scotland, and in the Midlands are a direct result of the commitment to a physical presence put in by AFA militants,

Fascists employ violence as a means to an end, they are not violence personified; to be violent is not to be a fascist. It is what lies behind that violence; virulent hatred of the working class and it's aspirations, that gives fascism it's character.

the ceaseless work of individuals and groups gaining results that no amount of lollipops and petitions will ever bring. AFA's work against the recent 'Ian Stuart Memorial Gig' made sure that it didn't go ahead, that C18's 'security' was turned on it's head (Charlie Sargeant and 'mad' Phil Edwards both making early bids for the 'shithouse of the year' award), and we still managed not to get battered by the Met (unlike both the ANL and C18, the latter getting a serious seeing to in a pub outside Waterloo, looked bloody nasty from where we were standing...).

AFA, despite all it's enemies, continues to go from strength to strength. We've proved time and again that only by militant action will the fascists be put down, and despite all the efforts of the establishment, the fascists, and the liberals, we're still in the game. Time will tell what happens with the ANL, YRE etc.. We're not asking anything of them, what's important to us is that AFA remains a viable outfit, and that it holds to it's tradition. Remember, though we've said it before, a physical commitment by us doesn't require every individual in the organisation to be a super fit street-fighter, what we do want is people who agree with our policy, and who will work towards it's implementation in the capacity best suited for them. Genuine anti-fascist militants should join AFA, and militants from other outfits should work with us on the day. True unity, unity in action, is the only 'unity' AFA calls for. A commitment to that is what earns AFA's respect, and it's the only thing that does.

"to ban or not to ban"

(The case against state bans on fascists)

The question of whether anti-fascists should call on the state to ban fascist organisations or demonstrations has always been a controversial one. The moderate wing of the anti-fascist movement has never had any problem in appealing to the state. For all their apparent differences on other issues, Searchlight, the Anti-Racist Alliance and the Anti-Nazi League have all made such demands on the police at one time or another.

Anti-Fascist Action represents a different tradition - militant anti-fascism. In contrast to the other groups mentioned, we have never called on the police to do our job for us. Nor will we. In this article, Jim Kane explains why.

Militant anti-fascism has a single goal - to forcefully disrupt the fascists from going about their business. Our aim is to prevent them from selling their papers, distributing their leaflets, putting up their stickers and posters. Our intention is to make it impossible for them to stand candidates in elections, and where they do manage to stand, to disrupt their campaigns at every stage. Ultimately, our aim is to crush them completely, to wipe them off the face of the earth.

These are serious matters: the fascists know the importance of physical force in politics, and are far better organised on this level than the so-called revolutionary left, which is long on words, short on action. If you set yourselves these aims, as we do, you have to work out a serious strategy of how to carry them out. You have to know what it is you are up against, and what it is you are doing.

We have never made any bones about it: to fight the fascists ideologically, you have to fight them physically. To fight them physically, to disrupt their meetings, to subject them to the pressure that they try to subject us to - to do any or all of these things means to break the law. A purely "legal" anti-fascism is no anti-fascism at all.

You don't have to be Einstein to work out the consequences: if you set out on a militant strategy, you are on a collision course with the forces of law and order, the state. If you seriously oppose the fascists in a way which is effective, you are operating against the state. This is a fact of life.

The fascists often taunt AFA as "bootboys for the establishment", claiming we do the mainstream parties' dirty work for them when we attack the "real" revolutionaries of the far right. It's not our job to point out to the fascists that they are making a mistake on this - let them dream on. But if we were to entertain the same illusion, that we are in some way involved in a common fight alongside the respectable politicians of the establishment parties, then we will come a cropper.

The moderate wing of the anti-fascist movement does see things in this way. Searchlight makes no secret of the fact that they trade information with the state, and that they want to see the state take a more active part in combating fascism. ARA and ANL similarly expect, though they are sometimes disappointed, that the police will take their "responsibility" for keeping the peace seriously enough to keep the fascists and anti-fascists apart.

This is what happened at Brick Lane after the fighting the first week after the BNP election victory. The anti-fascists turn up to demonstrate peacefully, while the police stop the fascists from getting anywhere near them. And it worked, in a fashion. The fascists lost their paper sale, or rather gave it up sooner than get involved in a regular set-piece with the Old Bill; the anti-fascists got to take over the corner of Bethnal Green Road and Brick Lane, and proclaim the area a "Nazi-Fee Zone."

Everyone, the BNP excepted, is happy. Or so it seems. True, the fascists temporarily lost their paper sale, and that is no bad thing. But the anti-fascists lost something else that is far more important in the long run: they lost their momentum. As we warned in the previous issue of Fighting Talk, two or three weeks of turning up in droves to shout anti-fascist slogans when you know the fascists won't be allowed to turn up is more than enough for most people.

Numbers fell very rapidly at Brick Lane thereafter - the Militant decided to call the whole thing off, just weeks after they pledged to drive the fascists out of Brick Lane "forever", while the Socialist Workers Party opted for a handful of paper sellers on the corner instead of a full ANL turnout.

The police were more than happy to keep the fascists at bay so long as it was a matter of hundreds of anti-fascists turning up - they didn't want any more bad publicity, after all. But when the numbers fell down to the tens, the police, too, called it a day, and left everyone to get on with it. Overtime or no, its cold out there protecting the anti-fascists.

The situation now is untenable in the long run. At the time of going to press, the SWP send half a dozen paper sellers for an hour, and then go home. Would these six or so Bolshevik hardies be able to hold off a BNP/C18 attack? Of course not. Does the SWP have a van load of heavies just out of sight, ready to respond if the fascists make their move? Don't make me laugh. Brick Lane is now like just any other SWP sales pitch - a few local branch members standing on the corner hoping to flog a few copies before they get thumped.

And get thumped they surely will. One day, when it suits them, the fascists will stroll down Bethnal Green Road and retake their paper sale, disposing of a few easy targets from the SWP in the process. The fruit of a strategy that relies on police protection is a good kicking.

AFA opposes the reliance on state bans for precisely this reason: it doesn't work. We are not like the pillocks in the Revolutionary Communist Party and their front organisation, Workers Against Racism, who go on TV to proclaim their willingness to defend the democratic rights of the fascists. We shed no tears, not even crocodile ones, on the odd occasion when the police get stuck into the fascists. In our book, the fascists have no rights, democratic or otherwise.

But "fighting" fascism with state bans means opting for the role of peaceful by-standers. It means not fighting fascism, but wishing someone else would do it for you. Worse than simply not working, it is actually counter-productive. The fascists thrive on presenting themselves as a party of action, who, in contrast to the left, can actually get things done, can actually make a difference. They laugh at most of the left as a bunch of middle class tossers who haven't got a clue.

Unfortunately, the left's habit of standing behind police barriers and striking up a chorus of "the police protect the fascists" does nothing to dispel this image. On the contrary. It proves the fascists right.

If we are to challenge the fascists effectively, not only on the streets (though that is crucial) but in the hearts and minds of white workers, we have to behave differently. We have to show, in action, that the fascists do not have a monopoly of violence and initiative. We have to show that we, too, can make a difference. We have to push them on the defensive, make THEM hide behind the barriers and shout "police protect the fascists - please!", and we have to make sure everyone knows about it.

Some groups, especially on the Trotskyist left, put forward the argument that it is wrong to call for state bans because any weapon that the state has in its arsenal, including any special powers you sanction for them to deal with the fascists, will ultimately be turned against you. In a sense this is true: the public order legislation that was enacted in the 1930s was allegedly to be used against Mosely and his British Union of Fascists, but in reality was used far more often against the Communist Party and other left-wing organisations.

But it would be a mistake to see too much in this. The capitalist state certainly prefers to have a legal fig-leaf to shroud its real intentions against the working class and its organisations, but it hardly needs it. The rules are there to be broken, and only middle class liberals should expect otherwise.

We, on the other hand, should face facts: the state is willing to use any means necessary against us, legal or otherwise. If they need extra powers to deal with the working class, they take them - and they certainly don't wait around for some well-meaning democrat to beg them to act against the fascists before they do so.

The argument against calling for state bans is more practical than that. We know that the fascists are the establishment's last resort when the going gets tough. We know, therefore, that when the state makes any partial moves against the fascists, it is to deal with a temporary sources of embarrassment - a propaganda ploy. It has nothing to do with really combating fascism.

Consequently, if fascism is to be stopped, it must be stopped by other means, by the direct action of the working class. State bans can play no role in this, our strategy. They are a diversion, a blind alley. Let others wander down there.

INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY:

BUILDING THE LINKS

AFA was invited to Germany by the Autonome Antifa (M) to support the 3rd annual anti-fascist day of action and demo in Gottingen (See "Germany Calling"). A delegation from Reflex magazine in France also attended. Delegates were also expected from Italy and Spain.

The lack of any obvious police presence on the day, is the direct result of effective militant actions in the past. It is important

to note that there is no direct liaison with the police, negotiations are conducted through the media.

Our discussions with the Gottingen Antifa Group were positive and productive, both our organisations will continue to work closely together. In the short term we plan to organise further speaking tours of Germany and the U.K.

It was agreed in principle to aim towards organising an international conference with the purpose of defining and then developing militant anti-fascism. There are many international organisations/ networks with impressive names and grand objectives, and whilst some of the material produced is undoubtedly of interest, they lack the will, the experience or the capability to develop and promote militant anti-fascist strategies. AFA has no interest in liberal talking shops. We recognise the importance of international work and are developing our contacts with militants in other countries. There are important lessons to be learnt from our different experiences, and it is essential that the isolation so often felt by, or forced upon, active militants is combated. As international links grow, so does the effectiveness of militant anti-fascism. This has to be the basis of all our discussions, there is no other agenda, as AFA's experiences have proved time and again.

An AFA delegate addressed the 1000 strong rally after the demonstration, "....Today is the first time AFA has been invited to speak publicly outside of Britain. Recently we also organised a speaking tour in Britain with a representative from Autonome Antifa (M). As you help us end our isolation, we help you end yours. From our own experience we see that the greatest threat to militants is isolation. It is vital that militants organise themselves within national borders and we naturally welcome the recent formation of the Antifaschistische Aktion Bundesweite Organisation in Germany. For any serious organisation that works within national borders the next step is to try to develop links with other militants across national borders. We consider this is absolutely vital. This is why we are here today. It is only a small step, but it is a small step in the right direction...."

The contacts between AFA and the Autonome Antifa (M) are now firmly established. Their regular column in

Anti FASCIST ACTION

Fighting Talk shows categorically that the battle in Germany is far from over, the anti-fascists remain defiant.

The Autonome Antifa (M), in common with AFA, have had many successes due to their strong commitment to militant anti-fascism, and are developing strategies for effective action, confronting fascism physically and ideologically. We support and encourage the recent formation of the Antifaschiste Aktion/ Bundesweite Organisation (Anti-fascist Action/Nationwide Organisation).

GERMANY CALLING

Germany Calling is a regular *FT* feature contributed by Autonome Antifa (M) a militant anti-fascist group in Gottingen, Lower Saxony.

Autumn 1993 in Germany

The anti-fascist initiatives in Autumn 1993 in Germany were organized primarily around two dates: October 3rd, the day of German Reunification and November 9th, the anniversary of the November revolution of 1918 and the day of the Nazi's anti-Jewish pogrom of 1938.

The day of re-unification is laden with symbolism for Germany as it marks the re-emergence of a single "Vaterland". The 2nd and 3rd of October were once again filled with anti-nationalist demonstrations.

Thousands of people gathered for a large anti-fascist demonstration in Passau on October 2nd. Their goal was to prevent the DVU (Deutsche Volksunion, a major fascist party) from staging their celebration events. Another large action was planned in Göttingen, where days of action have taken place around October 2nd for the past three years. Two other anti-fascist demonstrations were scheduled on the same day close to Göttingen. One was in Wernigerode, where an intense street fight between anti-fascists and Nazis had taken place a short time before. A few hundred anti-fascists came out for the demo. Nazis were not to be seen. The other anti-fascist demo in the area took place in Fulda, where the international commemoration of the anniversary of Rudolf Hess took place in August. The NPD (Nationaldemokratische Partie Deutschland, another large fascist party) had scheduled a demo in Fulda for October 2nd, but thanks to the presence of several thousand anti-fascists, it never got off the ground. Again, no Nazis surfaced. Although these three demonstrations ran parallel to one another, it was not a competitive situation. Contact between the groups was established beforehand and the actions were coordinated to build upon one another.

The Göttingen anti-fascist-actions were organized under the motto "Hoch die antifaschistische Solidaritat!" ("Up with anti-fascist solidarity!"). Like the year before, the day began with an agit-prop (agitation and propaganda) action at noon on the Marktplatz in the middle of town. A group of workers erected a 3.5 meter high wood and canvas pyramid with symbols of exploitation painted on it. The pyramid stood on a large black/red/yellow (German national colours) base. Around this visual centre were five people dressed as representatives of imperialist oppression: fascism (SA man), capitalism (capitalist), hegemonic ideology (bishop, wearing logos of TV stations rather than Christian symbols), militarism (Prussian officer), and patriarchy (man with missile phallus carrying a woman in a cage). The five figures passed out leaflets on which their function in the imperialist system was explained. A short action took place several times that afternoon. The five figures marching around were explained by two commentators and were pushed into coffins by Autonomen.

The agit-prop action reached thousands of people in the course of the afternoon and made it clear that Autonomer-antifascism is not just an anti-Nazi movement.

The last action was a demonstration in the evening, in which approximately 1000 people took part. The coffins for the figures were carried by demonstrators and were destroyed one by one in places around town where previous militant actions had taken place. This was an opportunity to remember those attacks and to justify the actions once again. At the end of the demo, the pyramid went up in flames (50 litres petrol). A party with the Blaggers and Spok ended the day. The police were not to be seen throughout the entire series of actions. This was made possible by the politics of Autonomen Antifa (M), who had made the concept of the action clear from the start.

In order to call the action a full success, another thousand people would have had to have been there. That was not possible, however, because of the other two actions that ran concurrently with the one in Göttingen. The media attention was focused on Fulda and Wernigerode. It was there that they hoped to find sensationalist reports about confrontations with fascists. The action in Göttingen was reported only here and there in the national press.

Meeting of the Ritterkreuzträger (Holders of the Knight's Cross)

The Ritterkreuzträger had their yearly meeting in Celle, near Hannnover, on October 16th. The Ritterkreuz was the highest decoration of the Hitler regime in the 2nd World War. That only 7,318 from the 15 million in Hitler's armies received this distinction makes it clear what kind of "heroic deeds" must have been done to be so recognised. The city of Celle proved that its reputation for being reactionary is not entirely unfounded. The Ritterkreuzträger were greeted by city dignitaries and had heavy police protection.

The Antifa group in Celle mobilized regionally for a counter demonstration in which 300 anti-fascists took part. After the speeches, a spontaneous demonstration formed at the Celle castle, where the memorial service was scheduled to happen. There were approximately 250 people at this demo, almost all Autonomen. At the castle, an attempt was immediately made to break through the first line of police. It was unsuccessful, however, because of hefty battering from the police.

The memorial service itself could not be stopped. It was followed by a parade of the Bundeswehr. (650 Ritterkreuzträger helped build up the Bundeswehr after the 2nd World War and they continue to have a close connection.) A delegation of the British army also laid a wreath for the "fallen -heroes". Shortly before, anti-fascists had attempted to stop another bus of Ritterkreuzträger. The police sent in their Sondertruppe (special forces, similar to anti-riot police in England).

In spite of the numerical superiority of the police, the confrontation was maintained throughout the day. There were several minor clashes, leading to a few injured anti-fascists. From this action 130 Autonomen were arrested. Because of the confrontations with the police, the Ritterkreuzträger meeting in Celle was in the newspaper headlines. That this could be achieved with so few anti-fascists is at least a partial success, even despite the arrests and procedures being carried out now against them.

November 9th

November 9th 1993 marks the 75th anniversary of the German revolution of 1918. One reason for remembering this revolution is that we see part of our

political roots there. Actions to commemorate this day took place in many states, organized by groups in the AA/BO (Antifaschistische Aktion/ Bundesweite Organization). The difficulty with November 9th is to find a way both to commemorate the November revolution and to remember the anti-Jewish pogrom of 1938. It is certainly not our aim to present these dates in opposition to each other. It is also clear, however, that reformist groups are not interested in celebrating the November revolution.

A series of events was organized in Göttingen between October 24th and November 14th. The central event in these Antifa Weeks was the exhibit documenting revolutionary resistance and anti-fascist organization in the Weimar Republic (1918-1933) that Autonome Antifa (M) put together. The exhibit highlighted local activity and contained 20 information panels and original materials. Because the exhibition was put together in this way, with emphasis on local history, the interest from school groups for tours was quite large. In addition to the many other visitors, several hundred students visited the exhibition. The other events were also well attended. Emil Carlebach, former prisoner in the concentration camp Buchenwald and member of the illegal camp committee, and Kurt Baumgarte, active fighter in the communist youth band KJVD and prisoner of ten years in Nazi concentration camps, were also on hand. It was important to work with other groups from the start. We worked together with a committee of the DGB (Dachverband der Gewerkschaften, the umbrella organization of trade unions) to organize the presentations. The fourteen events in the Antifa Weeks were well grounded politically and covered widely in the press.

One of the important points in the Antifa Weeks was a demonstration of 400 people on the evening of November 9th. The demo tied together the remembering of the Nazi pogrom of 1938 with the commemoration of the November revolution. The demo route proceeded to the site of a synagogue that had been burned down in the pogrom where a vigil and rally took place.

Arrests of Anti-fascists

At the end of August, 1993, 13 young women and men from Arolsen and the surrounding area were arrested. The state prosecutors charged them with "Mittäterschaft an versuchtem gemeinschaftlichen Totschlag und schweren Landfriedensbruch" (participation in the attempted murder and seriously disturbing the peace). The charge of murder has been reduced to -schwere Korperverletzung- (serious bodily injury). This wave of arrests came after a conflict between neo-Nazis and Autonomen anti-fascists on August 14, 1993. The neo-Nazis were on the way to a demonstration on the anniversary of the death of Rudolf Hess. At one meeting point, the Nazis were attacked by Autonomen. The 22 year old Thomas Kubiack, a functionary of the "Sauerländer Aktionsfront" was seriously injured. The "Sauerländer Aktionsfront" is a front organization of the well known neo-Nazi Christian Worch's -GdNF- (Gesinnungsgemeinschaft der Neuen Front). The expressed goal of the GdNF is the rebuilding of the NSDAP (Hitler's Nazi party). The "Sauerländer Aktionsfront" is made up of approximately 60 skinheads. Weapons, including assault weapons from the Bundeswehr, were found in houses of members of "Sauerländer Aktionsfront" in a police search on November 4, 1993.

The anti-fascists faced with arrests and court proceedings are primarily between the ages of 18 and 22. One of the suspects could not be arrested and has been underground since August. He is considered to be the principle suspect and is described by the police as "known by the police", "unemployed", and "a political traveller". All of the accused have been released on conditions from prison. They are not allowed to contact one another and some must report daily to the police. The Kripo (civil police) have tried to put pressure on people through observation, house searches, and

continuous questioning in order to gather information. The trials will begin at the end of January/beginning of February. They will be tried separately and heavy penalties can be counted on. It is likely that the state prosecutors will try to set an example of them as a "sign against self justice".

A functionary of the Deutsche Liga (large fascist party) was stabbed by anti-fascists on April 4, 1992 in Berlin. In December, 1993, a year and a half after the deed, the police began their wave of arrests. Warrants for arrests were put out for ten people, five of whom have already been arrested. The five who have already been arrested are all Turkish citizens, a woman and four men. Those still being looked for are German and Turkish.

The police are searching extensively for the five others. They have already searched several houses and observed meetings of anti-fascist groups who are members of the AA/BO. On December 10th, the police tried to arrest someone—mistaken for one of the suspects—at an AA/BO meeting.

The support work for the prisoners continues. There have already been several demonstrations at the sites where they are being held.

Five Years in Prison

On May 31, 1991, neo-Nazi leader Rainer Sonntag was shot in Dresden. Sonntag and 50 other Nazis were standing in front of a brothel, threatening to destroy it, when Simeonidis, the proprietor, shot him with a shotgun. In the first trial, the Dresden district court recognized his motive as self-defence and he was acquitted. The verdict was, however, reversed and he was sentenced in October, 1993 to five years in jail with the possibility of probation after 10 months. On the day of the funeral of Rainer Sonntag, over 2000 Nazis, some in uniform, marched in Dresden.

Recent news

Friedhelm Busse, the chairperson of FAP (Freiheitliche Deutschen Arbeiterpartei, a major fascist group), has once again gotten his due. On November 6, 1993, he had the gall to approach an Autonomen antifa information table in Bonn. He was, of course, immediately recognized by the Autonomen. A few masked comrades made it clear what Autonomen think of Nazis. After this short exchange of ideas, Busse had to be taken to the hospital. A boot kick took out some teeth, his foot was broken, and he took on a general black and blue colour.

January 1994, Autonome Antifa (M)

Appendix

As well as our regular report from Germany we'll also be including as appendices to them a breakdown of the various far-right groups who are currently operating in the country. In this issue, Part 1 of that breakdown looks at those organisations making up the national-conservative right:

In spite of continuous renaming, banning, and conflicts over political lines, a count of the fascist parties and organizations in the BRD has emerged. The confusion in the various organizations does not hide the fact that they always had basically the same political shape and the same people behind them. The fascist parties can essentially be divided into two large groups: the fascist national-conservative right and the neo-national socialist right.

The fascist national-conservative right

The most important organizations of the fascist national-conservative right are the NPD, the DVU, the Republikaner, and the Deutsche Liga. All of these parties attempt to work with similar political images. Officially they distance themselves from the neo-nazi groups and acts of violence. Their programs and policies are also formed in such a way that at first glance it is difficult to identify them as fascists. They present themselves as serious, legitimate groups to the public. There are no uniforms etc. in these groups. Representatives of the party usually wear suits. Because of this, they are also referred to as suit-and-tie fascists. All in all these parties try to make themselves known as a kind of conservative alternative. However, an analysis of the programs and people in these groups uncovers an obvious fascist essence.

NPD (Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschland)

The NPD is the oldest extreme right party in the BRD, founded on November 18, 1964. Former high Nazi functionaries from the time of the 3rd Reich have been active in this organization since the very beginning. Until 1968 they were able to gather increasingly more members and votes. At the highpoint of their parliamentary success they claimed 61 seats in state parliaments and 183 local offices.

So far the political highpoint for the NPD was the national election of 1969, when they received 4.3% of the vote (1,5 million votes), just short of winning a seat in the national parliament. After this election, the NPD sank into meaninglessness in terms of the parliament. It has remained important, however, for the development of neo-fascism in the BRD. In particular, the youth organization of the NPD, JN (Junge Nationaldemokraten), developed almost all cadre in the later neo-nazi terrorist groups and organizations. Today, the NPD has a membership of 5800. The chairperson of the party is Günter Deckert. The JN currently has approximately 200 members. Their chairperson is Andreas Storr.

The NPD has considerable influence in the right-wing trade union, the DAV (Deutscher Arbeitnehmer Verband). This organization has approximately 8000 members and is essentially distinct from the NPD.

The most recent vote was a disappointment for the NPD; they received less than 1% of the vote. In addition, the party is in crisis due to internal conflict and financial difficulties. Although, such a situation is nothing new in the history of the NPD, and it will still be likely to be counted as one of the important fascist parties in the BRD in the future.

DVU-Deutsche Volksunion

The DVU was founded in 1971 by the reactionary publisher Gerhard Frey, who has been the chairperson since then. At the beginning, the DVU was not a party, but rather was a radical-right consolidation movement. Above all, "old comrades" from the time of the III. Reich gathered in the DVU. Not much has changed in terms of age and structure and so the DVU is also referred to as a retiree party. Nevertheless, the DVU has 30,000 members and is the largest extreme right party in the BRD. On top of that, the DVU is in the position to come up with large sums of money for election battles. Its national chairperson, Gerhard Frey, is a multi-millionaire and publisher of radical-right newspaper and literature. The "National Zeitung" and the "Deutsche Wochen-Zeitung/ Deutscher Anzeiger" alone have a weekly circulation of 100,000.

It is only since March 5, 1987 that the DVU is a political party. At first the DVU and the NPD combined in the DVU/Liste D (D for Deutschland) for elections. Since their national convention on Febuary 5, 1991 in Passau they call themselves Deutsche Volksunion (DVU). In September 1991 the DVU won seats in the Bremen and Bremerhaven city council. In the state elections on March 5, 1992 in Schleswig-Holstein, the party received 6.3% of the vote which entitled them to 6 seats in the state parliament.

Die "Deutsche Volksunion" und ihre Aktionsgemeinschaften
Für Deutschlands Rechte
DEUTSCHE VOLKSUNION (DVU)
die führende überparteiliche Bewegung der verfassungstreuen Rechten und freiheitlichen Mitte (Vorsitzender Dr. Gerhard Frey)
Ehrenbund Rudel
Gemeinschaft zum Schutz der Frontsoldaten
Aktion deutsche Einheit (AKON)
setzt sich für die Wiedervereinigung Gesamtdeutschlands ein
Volksbewegung für Generalamnestie (VOGA)
arbeitet für ein Ende der Kriegsverbrecherprozesse gegen Besiegte des II. Weltkriegs
Aktion Deutsches Radio und Fernsehen (ARF)
will die Interessen des deutschen Volkes bei diesen Medien durchsetzen
Initiative für Ausländerbegrenzung (I. f. A.)
verteidigt den deutschen Charakter Deutschlands
Stärken Sie die DVU und ihre Aktionsgemeinschaften durch Beitritt!

The 'national-conservative' right and their symbols.

Frey has contact with the English fascist David Irving. The DVU has organized several series of events for Irving in the BRD. Irving is also invited to large events by the DVU. The yearly central rally in Passau where up to 7000 fascists from inside and outside the BRD gather is one such event.

The party continues on an upward trend. Several other organizations are a part of the DVU. They are: Aktion Oder-Neisse (AKON), which challenges the eastern border of the BRD, Volksbewegung für Generalamnestie (VOGA), which works for general amnesty for NS criminals, Initiative für Auslènderbegrenzung (IfA), Aktion deutsches Radio und Fernsehen (ARF), Ehrenbund Rudel (ER), Deutscher Schutzbund für Volk und Kultur (DSVK).

Liste D

In March 1987, the NPD and the DVU combined under the name of DVU/Liste D for the elections. At first they were rather successful with this common Liste D. Their parliamentary breakthrough should have been the European elections on August 18, 1989. The fascists hoped that with their combined Liste D they would manage to get a seat in the European parliament. It started with a monstrous propaganda campaign. In January, 1989, 28 million households in the BRD received their promotion brochure through the mail. Liste D had public election events all over, events which often ended with street fights between anti-fascists and the police. Liste D was only able to capture 1.6% of the vote in this election. After the election the DVU and the NDP split and the Liste D disintegrated.

Frey blamed the election debacle on the Republikaner. The Republikaner took part in the European elections for the first time in 1989, running concurrently with Liste D. Both parties were competing for the same voters, splitting their base, and leading to an advantage for the Republikaner. They continue to have this sort of relationship. DVU and the Repubikaner want nothing to do with one another and are in direct competition with each other. That has lead, in a few elections, to neither party receiving the minimum 5% of the vote in order to gain a seat in parliament.

The Republikaner

CSU politicians who thought that the bavarian Strauss government had too friendly relations with the DDR founded the Republikaner on November 27, 1983. The original founders left the party rather quickly after its founding because of the increasing numbers of former NPD members who were joining. The former national chairperson of the Republikaner is Franz Schönhuber, also the former head of department of the Bayerischen Rundfunks (Bavarian Radio). He lost his position at the Rundfunk after his book Ich war dabei (I Was There) was made public. In the book, he describes his time with the SS-bodyguards of Adolf Hitler during the 3rd Reich.

One of the first parliamentary successes for the Republikaner was the European elections in 1989, when they received 7.1% of the votes. Enough to bring them a seat in the European parliament.

After this initial success, the party came into difficulties because of internal disputes and regional splintering. In the meantime, the Republikaner were able to stengthen their party structure. They gathered political wind with their success in the state elections of 1992. In Berlin they received 8,3% of the votes, in Baden Wurttemberg 10,9%. The Republikaner are hoping to capture at least 10% of the votes in the upcoming European elections. There is, unfortunately, a good chance that they will achieve their goal.

Deutsche Liga für Volk und Heimat (Deutsche Liga)

The Deutsche Liga was founded in October, 1991 as the -Sammelbecken nationaler Patrioten- (Reservoir of national patriots). Organizations like Front National, in France, the Flaams Blok in Belgium, and Freiheitliche Partei Österreich (FPÖ) are all similar to the Deutsche Liga. Deutsche Liga has not been able to reach its goal of recruiting members of NPD, DVU, and the Republikaner and remains politically isolated. The cases when they have taken part in elections have ended in disaster for them. The leading functionaries of the Deutsche Liga are predominantly former officials of the NPD and the Republikaner. Their general secretary is the 45 year old Franz Glashauser. The party, whose program closely follows that of the NPD, has approximately 800 members.

Organising

In November '93 London AFA called a public meeting in South East London to address the problems of increasing racial violence and fascist organisation in the area. Here we reproduce extracts from the main AFA speech...

The conventional left-wing view, certainly the view of the likes of the Socialist Workers Party or Militant, is that racism is an anomaly, a diversion from the onward march to a more egalitarian, socialist society. The reality is that reform and reaction are built into the capitalist system like boom and slump.

All the evidence suggests that, with the working class in retreat, society is in any case moving remorselessly in the opposite direction. If that is basically correct, then the "war" between left and right will be long and intense, or will be long and intense if we develop a "long war strategy" that is in tune with this reality. The consequence of the conventional left analysis is to regard the BNP as no more than an irritating distraction from the real class struggle.

Remember, it is only about 18 months ago that the SWP described the BNP as "a few isolated fanatics". When the BNP got 20% in a council election twelve months ago, the ANL reassured themselves that this was a freak result due entirely to a low turn-out. It is entirely consistent therefore that after the election in the Isle of Dogs, the result is described by them as a "blip", and media analysts talk reassuringly of "special conditions".

This analysis might sound a little more convincing if either had actually predicted the result. In addition, the BNP's vote locally of 34% is similar to a national survey conducted by the Sunday Express that shows 36% now in favour of repatriation.

The "special conditions" referred to earlier is of course only a code word for especially "bad" conditions, which are of course not exclusive to the Isle of Dogs. Neither is support for the BNP exclusive to this area.

This fact was confirmed by a telephone survey conducted by the East London Advertiser. Would you vote BNP? 81% of the 5000 respondents said "Yes". Taking into account that this particular method is open to manipulation, and so slashing a generous 50% off, leaves support for BNP policies at only one in three rather than four out of five!

Despite this devastating exposure of the ANL's entire analysis, reality will continue to be regarded as an intruder. A week before the election, Socialist Worker boasted that "the ANL and the local Island Against the Nazis have done a brilliant job." Post-election this sense of triumphalism was reduced only a fraction, when in the letters page of The Guardian the ANL campaign was described merely as "energetic".

"Energetic" is an interesting word to use in the circumstances, don't you think? Either the BNP vote leapt by 75% despite the ANL, or it jumped 75% because of them. In any case, the Isle of Dogs campaign serves as a study of the ANL strategy in microcosm. In other words, though the patient dies, the operation is still regarded as a success.

Even now that the problem can no longer be ignored, there is no long term strategy. Their agenda is governed totally by the politics of the latest atrocity, and their own short term self interest.

The whole campaign is run on the same basis as any other issue, say the poll tax or water privatisation - stickers, pickets, marches etc. For them, fascism is nothing but terror and violence, and so the analysis is both short term and entirely superficial.

Racism is not always the cause of violence, though it may serve as the justification for it. So for sections of the white working class a race attack is regarded like national service, as "doing their bit". Race hatred is seen as a form of solidarity. A race attack is looked upon as a service to the community, to the nation - to the race.

Despite this, the ANL explain to working class voters that "the Tories are the real enemy," in areas where nobody votes Tory. They fail to understand that in many areas of London where the fascists have potential, it is because the working class have lost faith not only in the politics of reform, but in socialism itself.

Of course, the working class recognise that the Tories are the class enemy, but also, because they never voted Tory anyway it is chiefly the Labour Party which has betrayed their trust. As Tony Benn pointed out recently: "Fascism grows when the left fails to give an alternative vision. The Labour Party has not kept alive the class argument. Within the working class, the race argument seems simple." In the absence of class, race. In the absence of socialism, nationalism.

What is true of the Labour Party is also true of the smaller organisations to its left. The only time working people, black or white, see the "revolutionary" left on their doorsteps is if the Labour vote is threatened by the likes of the BNP. While the Labour Party has consistently betrayed the working class, the left has just as consistently ignored them. The SWP, for instance, does not itself stand in places like the Isle of Dogs. So when they campaign against the BNP, the substantial message is: be nice, be understanding to your neighbour, and, oh yes, vote Labour.

This is a Christian rather than a Marxist approach. The unsurprising response from the working class is ... "Bollocks to that."

The left, without a trace of irony, denounce the BNP for being a violent party, and in the next breath insist that they intend to smash the BNP off the streets. This blood curdling threat is delivered with little evidence on past form of the ability or inclination to do so. They congratulate themselves for exposing the BNP as nazis, apparently oblivious to the fact that unlike the National Front, the BNP have never bothered to deny it.

On the day of the Isle of Dogs by-election, for instance, the BNP candidate was happy to discuss with a Guardian reporter the literary and political merits of Mein Kampf. His victory there is proof, if any was needed, that many working class people are so alienated from the left and the politics of the establishment parties that they don't care whether the BNP are nazis or not. The BNP speak the language of the embittered Labour voter,

promise change, and use terror to deliver.

The ANL/YRE on the other hand at local and national level increasingly identify themselves with the status quo, that is, with the establishment. There may be short term gains, publicity etc., but in the long run this will prove disastrous.

Given their conservative credentials, it would always have been difficult for the BNP to present itself as a radical party, but now by and large the revolutionary left is doing the job for them: they will become radicals by default. It must never be forgotten that fascism is not the cause of the left's failure, but the consequence of that failure. Until this is accepted and understood, it is inevitable that any strategy to counter fascism that emerges from this quarter will be a blend of previous blunders: a compound blunder.

Sections of the media and the left who believe that the BNP should be treated as something apart from the body politic want them banned. Whether ideas can be outlawed by legislation is arguable. In any case, the difference between their declared policies and the policies the current Conservative government have pursued since 1979 is marginal.

The "common sense" approach to immigration and race relations goes like this: immigration causes overcrowding, overcrowding causes poverty, poverty causes resentment, resentment causes racism, racism causes fascism, fascism causes hatred, hatred causes violence, violence causes change, change means repatriation, repatriation means tranquillity, tranquillity means prosperity etc. This is a chain of events that is inter-dependent, a sequence that all the mainstream parties identify with on some level privately, while for the moment publicly rejecting the final solution.

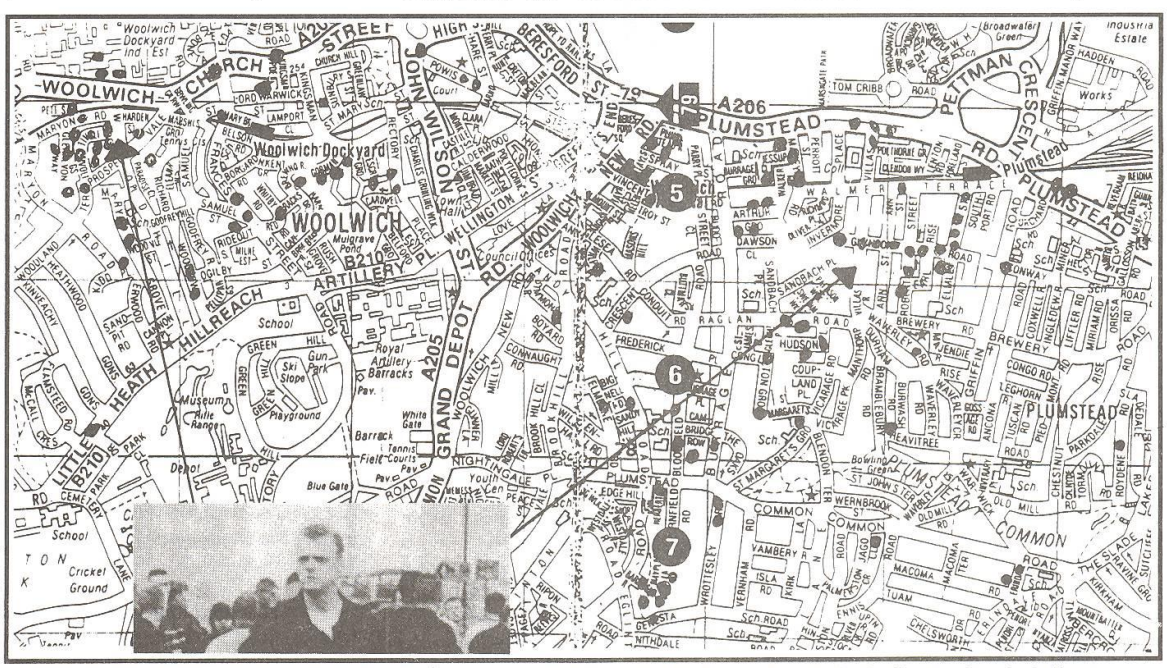
The Tories have restricted the rights of unions to operate. The BNP challenge their right to exist. The government has ended the right to abortion on demand, the far-right would ban it. Local government democracy has been eroded since 1979. Previously elected bodies have been replaced by more efficient unelected quangos. For the BNP, the Tories' model for local government is their model for national government.

While the methods are different, the motives are the same. The BNP simply propose to take them to their logical conclusion. The difference between restricting immigration, banning all immigration, and forced repatriation is largely a matter of degree.

As with immigration, so with other issues: in direct comparison with the BNP, the Tories are conservative with a small "c". The ultra-conservatives are the BNP, conservatives with a big "C".

In south-east London, anti-fascism, like the magazine for the homeless, is the "Big Issue". To date, their have been six major demonstrations against the BNP headquarters in Welling, In addition, there have been 29 lobbies of the council. As well as bombarding John Major with postcards, there have been numerous pickets, posters and petitions all demanding that the authorities close down the BNP HQ. The campaign, which was started over three years ago, has not once in that time made the slightest impact on the only people who use the shop - BNP supporters.

The much-touted Unity March on October 16th was, it is claimed, designed to mobilise public opinion, when all evidence suggests that local opinion, as a result of previous stunts, is moving towards conclusions contrary to that



Concentrations of race attacks in part of South East London. I nset is leading BNP activist Ian Dell, who lives and works in these areas.

intended by the march organisers.

The general attitude seems to be that if something is worth doing, it is worth doing even if it is done badly. We disagree. Following the Rolan Adams march against the bookshop in April 1991, we offered the opinion that:

"...A protest march once a year will not cause the shop to close. If the entire anti-fascist movement accepts the challenge, we must be seen to finish the job this time. If we fail again the price will be high. For if the racist/fascist influence in south-east London is confronted but not crushed, it will as a result be strengthened. Their morale will be strengthened. The race attacks will multiply. Next year or the year after there will be other marches because there will be other funerals. That is how the road runs."

In direct proportion to the number and ferocity of the attacks, the number and size of the marches has increased. Same route, different victims. Public protests, though in many cases simply self-promotion, still have a place as part of any effective strategy, but not as an alternative to one.

In response to the ethnic cleansing being pursued by fascist supporters and sympathisers in areas of south-east London, we refuse to accept that 29 lobbies of the council is an adequate response. This tactic in particular is, after over two years, regarded, quite rightly, as a sign of impotence rather than commitment.

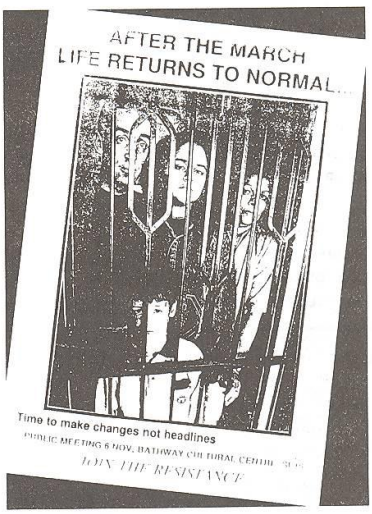
In addition, the campaign to "Close Down the BNP HQ" is, of itself, purely symbolic, since even if a victory of sorts was achieved, it would do nothing to resolve the underlying and deep-rooted problems in the area, and is now, in fact, a diversion from them.

Fascist influence in south-east London has grown, not as a consequence of the existence of the bookshop, but from an ability by their activists to exist anonymously and operate with impunity within and from the community. Research in the area has shown that the race attacks, which run at about 16,000 a year and which vary from being spat at in the street to determined knife attacks, happen in clusters.

Because of this, the high risk areas, those with the highest concentration of race attacks, define themselves. These are the same areas that play host to prominent BNP activists. Exactly the same neighbourhoods that extend facilities to them - this is where these mini-pogroms are conducted with the most savagery and conviction.

The race attackers and fascists within the community must be flushed out, identified and isolated, or they will continue to identify, isolate and murder us. While we understand that race attacks are a national problem and the BNP are a mere reflection of a wider working class alienation that ultimately demands a political solution, the widespread terrorism and the increasingly lethal nature of the attacks in south-east London demands an immediate and specific response.

As regards the major anti-racist groups who have been operating in the area since 1991, their dismal track record speaks for itself. Both they and their tactics have utterly failed. Indeed, some of the bereaved families who initially put their faith in them now speak bitterly of a feeling of betrayal and of their lack of confidence in their ability to deliver. Others insist that rather than solve their problems, their antics have contributed to it.



It is for this reason that we are backing the call for the setting up of a new anti-racist/anti-fascist organisation of a new type, an organisation of active resistance, an organisation whose tactics and strategy will be designed to make a difference rather than just headlines, which will be run by and in the interests of those sections of the community now under attack.

It is no secret that up to now local concerns and tactics have been made subordinate to the interests of various national campaigns. This relationship must be reversed. Local tactics must reflect local concerns.

While the initial aim must be to root out the organised racists and fascists, the motive force behind the attacks, and throw down a challenge to those who provide them with facilities, the long-term solution must be to create communities of resistance.

By creating some space, perhaps in time a real working class alternative to the lying bullshit that now passes for politics in this country can emerge. The entire left has failed the working class, black and white alike, though many prefer to believe it is the working class that has failed the left. We are here today not only because they are bad socialists, but more specifically because they have also shown themselves to be bad anti-fascists.

In the mean time we must deal with the task in hand. While certainly formidable, the job is not impossible. What we propose is that, to provide a focus, committees of resistance are set up to deal directly with the particular problems in their own local areas.

Everybody has their part to play - the young, the old, organisations and individuals. Providing information is just as important as having the ability to act on that information.

The terror can, and indeed must be reversed. But there is no miracle cure; if the fight is to be won, it will be done estate by estate, area by area, town by town.

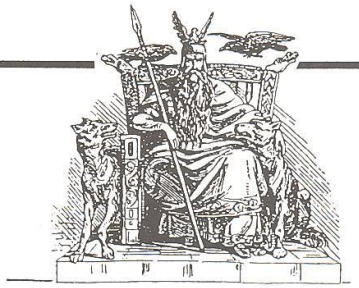
In certain parts of the country, where the fascists have sought a toe hold, they have been promptly and perhaps even ruthlessly dealt with. Race attacks in these areas, such as north London, an area very similar as regards conditions, substandard housing, high unemployment etc., has race attacks at a fraction of the level of areas such and south-east and east London where the BNP are now dug in.

In other parts of the country, in cities such as Glasgow and Manchester, by employing the same single-minded approach, the BNP's progress has been checked, and in the case of the latter almost obliterated.

It is a case of cause and effect. Wherever there is racial violence, the BNP will be. Where there is no racial violence, they will organise it. Where they organise is where the situation, now matter how bad, will quickly deteriorate from the random attack to a co-ordinated and politically motivated campaign.

The BNP promise change, and they use terror as a tactic to deliver. What the evidence shows, in simple terms, is that if you stop the BNP, you stop the terror.

A VIEW FROM VALHALLA



From the pen of the man who wrote the essential '100 Interesting Things To Do With A Viking Helmet' - Mr. Dan Woinsaker himself - we present another voyage of discovery to that strange land inhabited by Nazi boneheads, their troubled thoughts ... and those rather attractive small furry creatures.

Photo-journalist Leo Regan has recently had a book published called 'Public Enemies'. He spent two years travelling throughout Britain and Europe photographing and interviewing Blood and Honour boneheads, and even stood bail for Paul Parrish, one of the fascists jailed for the very violent attack in Buntingford (see Issue 5 of FT). I do not think Regan himself is a fascist sympathiser, but Odin only knows what he was trying to achieve by producing this book, apart from making money.

The book is split between text and photos, with an introduction by Nicholas Mosley, son of the 30s fascist leader Sir Oswald, who is critical of the fascists but reckons "members of the British Union (of Fascists) of the 1930s were for the most part spruce young men who liked to be photographed standing to attention or marching in formation ... their stated aim was the preservation of peace." Is that right!?

The text itself will be a source of great amusement and encouragement to the fascists, with all the tales of drinking, fighting, teaching young kids to seig-heil, and shoving shit through letter boxes - but it serves absolutely no use to anyone else. The idea that fascists can be dismissed as a bunch of nutters is extremely dangerous.

However, I do recommend that a few others should try what this particular Aryan Warrior did when his girlfriend dumped him: "I went off me head. I went to stab him and her brother grabbed me through the arms. I couldn't move and I just cut me throat. I cut it three times. They took me down the hospital, gave me 24 stitches, kicked me out. I got home, sat in a hot bath and cut me wrists. They took me back down and stitched me arms up. It weren't too bad though."

The only other bit I found interesting was what this fascist said: "Violence works. If I want to change things I could sit down and write leaflets or I could write books, or I could talk a lot about it. But to me that doesn't get nowhere. Violence gets somewhere. You get attention and you get power. If you go out and you smash the enemy off the streets, who's going to argue with you?" Exactly what old Adolf used to say, and exactly why we fight them on the streets.

The photos are meant to show the "private face of these public enemies", and feature a selection of well-known fascists at work, rest and play - including a ridiculous one of `Big Nick' (`Fat Nick') Marsh doing something unpleasant with a hoover. Presumably before he went to prison for the Buntingford attack. I can't speak for the rest of you, but it comes as no surprise to me to find out these people have homes, jobs, kids, families, etc. Yes, fascists are human beings.

Blood and Honour have previously published two magazines called "White Skins, White Pride" which were just collections of photos of fascist bones, and as far as I'm concerned "Public Enemies" is no better. Not even worth nicking.

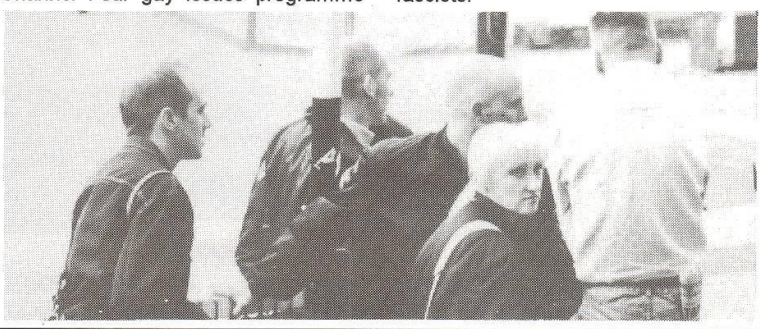
After the death of Ian Stuart, Nicky Crane, another of the founding members of Blood and Honour, has recently died. Crane had been totally ostracised from the Neo-Nazi movement after he appeared on the Channel Four gay issues programme 'Out', in which he made public the fact he was gay. He also renounced his fascist past.

During the 80s Crane was one of the country's most active race attackers. While in the British Movement he led 200 skinheads rampaging through Brick Lane attacking Asians. He was also jailed for an unprovoked attack on a black family at a bus stop in South London.

Many of the leading members of Blood and Honour knew of Crane's dual role as Nazi activist and an actor in hard core gay movies, but it was never revealed because of the respect Crane commanded amongst B & H supporters. Not until Crane had contracted the full AIDS virus did he start to deny his past. On one occasion, in 1990, while Crane was giving evidence in court against three AFA members, he said he no longer had any contact with B & H - yet the person accompanying him to court was wearing a B & H T-shirt and badges.

I dropped into the 'Stool and Pigeon' for a quick pint the other day and heard an interesting little tale about C18 and 'the brothers' from Germany falling out after the Becontree/Bow/Waterloo fiasco on January 15th. Seems our short-haired friends from Germany weren't over impressed with C18's handling (ha!) of the gig that never happened and it all kicked off! No more brothers wars, eh?

The next issue will be an Ian Stuart special, which will cover the fascist response to his death, the memorial gig, and a few juicy stories from anti-fascists.



Leo Regan (left) with the fascists at Waterloo in September 1992

"THE GOOD OLD DAYS"

The roots of AFA in Manchester

The late '70s saw the emergence of the ANL in response to the growth of the National Front (NF). The NF targeted left-wing, Irish and Troops Out public meetings in the town centre.

In response to the threats and attacks on left and progressive meetings, a stewards group was formed by anti-fascist activists from a number of left groups in Manchester. The primary function was defensive, and with the influx of activists politicised by the ANL, this type of front line defensive grouping attracted the interest of many keen to implement Sir Matt Busby's football strategy "Attack is the best means of defence," in the political arena against the fascists. This was evident when the Manchester NF football team "The Lilly Whites" attempted to fulfill their league fixtures, only to be kicked out of the park by some tough tackling anti-fascists.

Left/Irish meetings were resolutely defended and fascists activities were attacked/disrupted without let up. The high point of the ANL campaign was the Manchester Carnival.

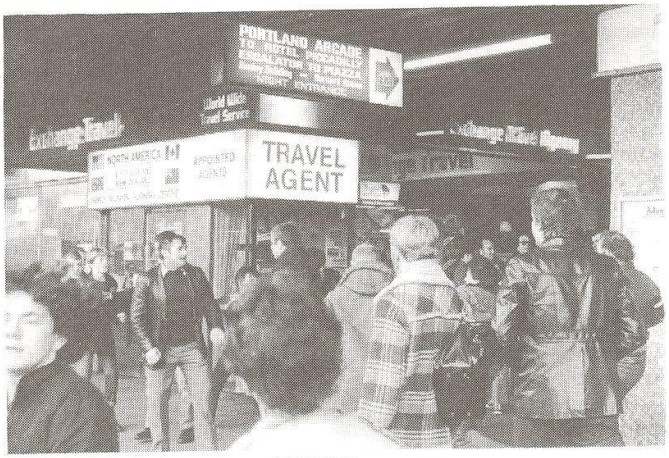
After the '79 election demise of the NF, the ANL organisationally ground to a halt. However, fascist activity didn't, and the beginning of the eighties saw the NF attempt to sustain a paper sale in the centre of Manchester. This was met with attack after attack and on one occasion the whole NF group were ambushed at their meeting point. A number of NF supporters were taken to hospital including a German soldier on leave from NATO duties.

Both covert and overt operations designed to disable the NF organisationally and demoralise their membership were carried out. The net result was that the NF were driven out of the town centre and no fascist group has managed to regain the position since.

1981 saw the re-emergence of the ANL in response to the continued NF and British Movement (BM) threat, both now operating on an openly nazi ticket. It also saw the Hunger Strike Commemorations for Irish Republican POW's held during the year. This led to the resurrection of the Manchester Martyrs Commemoration. The issue of Irish Nationalism has always proved a great motivating factor for British Nationalists in Manchester, especially after the successes in 1974 of driving the Manchester Martyrs March (MMM) off the streets amid much anti-Irish hysteria in the aftermath of the Birmingham bombings.

The MMM of '81 and subsequent years ensured a large fascist turn out, and likewise an even more determined anti-fascist presence, who showed both the capacity and tenacity to extend the skirmishes to before, during and after the march. This has been fine-tuned over the years to the extent that even in 1993 despite the MMM being a shadow of its former self, the fascists still implement an "arrive late and leave early policy". No doubt there are some who will be leaving even earlier this year!

The ANL which re-emerged in 1981 contained many of the anti-fascist street activists of the late '70s who had now embraced the need to organise politically as well as being active on the streets.



READY.....

This led to a more direct style of political campaigning with anti-fascist groups operating week in week out at Maine Road (Manchester City's Football Ground), and Old Trafford (United's, need I explain!). Pat Crerand, ex-Celtic and Man United player came out on occasions to assist the Reds Against the Nazis (RAN) group issuing leaflets.

At Maine Road, the situation was somewhat more serious as MCFC had an in-house nazi NF following, who had on occasions attempted to leaflet the ground. The arrival of Blues Against the Nazis (BAN) incurred the wrath of City's nazis and the anti-fascists came under attack. Word of the attack spread and at the next home game, the NF attacked again but this time they were counter attacked by the 'Kool Kats' (MCFC Black Youth). One key NF member was chased into City's souvenir shop and severely beaten by some of City's anti-fascist supporters.

With the escalation of violence by the NF at Maine Road, BAN wrote to P. Swales (City's chairman) asking him to condemn the City NF following. He refused on the basis that one lot were as bad as the other! This proved the widely held theory that he knew as much about politics as he did about football.

On a regional level, ANL activists from Manchester involved themselves in the campaign against NF chairman Andrew Brons, who was working as a lecturer at Harrogate Further Education College. Indeed Manchester anti-fascists along with Asian youth from Bradford, operated with distinction against the fascists (bussed in from Leeds) on a number of occasions. Civic recognition was bestowed on some anti-fascists, who received custodial sentences from Harrogate magistrates for turning over the BM. On another occasion, Steve Gaunt, Brons' minder, found himself on the receiving end from anti-fascists after being arrested and handcuffed to the arm of a solitary police officer. The officer was unable to make any further arrests or take

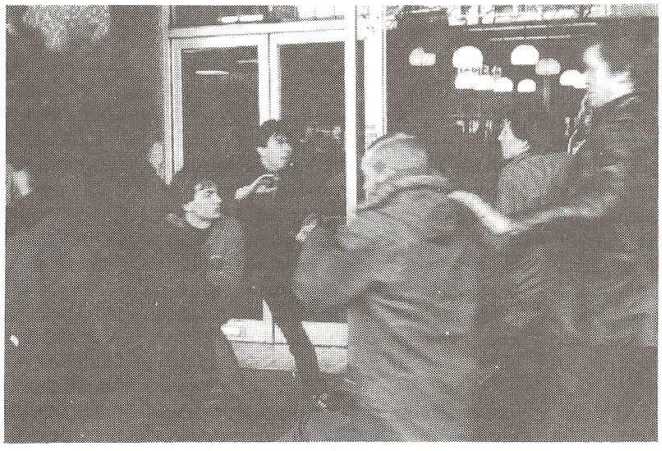
contemporaneous notes! Recently Searchlight informed its readers that Steve Gaunt had returned from Croatia minus one leg, it was last seen flying backwards over Bosnia. So if you've got any odd socks you know were to send them, or even the odd boot!

Nationally the ANL were organising the Leeds Rock Against Racism (RAR) carnival. In the month leading up to the carnival Manchester ANL activists ran a full time office and leafleted every school, college, gig, and football match they could cover. The return was phenomenal, with over ten double decker buses filled with carnival goers from the Manchester area. At the same time a group of anti-fascists were charged with offences relating to militant anti-fascism in Rochdale, for which eight of them were eventually sent to prison. This also coincided with the SWP's move against squaddist elements in both London and Manchester, of whom they were politically embarrassed, prior to disbanding the ANL and pulling out of anti-fascist politics.

The SWP expelled anti-fascists including some who were jailed for anti-fascist activities whilst members of the SWP/ ANL. Comrades indeed!

The jailing of eight anti-fascists for militant action against fascism created problems for the families. The Rochdale Defendants Fund was set up to raise money. The campaign asked for support only from those who supported the actions of anti-fascists. Conditional support or support offered to only some of the 8 was refused. The SWP to their shame attempted to raise money for only two of the jailed anti-fascists.

The campaign ran for 15 months during which contributions and donations came from many trade union groups, branches and shop steward committees. Gigs were held throughout the year, the one which proved to be most successful brought together Manchester's top three reggae bands and showcased Elliot Rashman (currently Simply Red's manager) as guest DJ. UB40 sent autographed LPs to be raffled.



STEADY.....

In 1985 AFA is formed by those committed to ideological and physical confrontation. This was soon put to the test when the NF attempted to hold a march and rally in Stockport in 1986.

The SWP were strategically massed behind the police cordon outside the town hall, whilst the NF walked past waving banners. Two vans travelling in opposite directions pull alongside the nazis, whereupon anti-fascists emerged from the rear and engage in meaningful dialogue with them. The nazis and the police retreat to the shelter of the waiting room of Stockport British Rail station.

A line of police moved on the anti-fascists who in turn moved towards them, whereupon the police and dogs turn and run! Attempts to induce the nazis to leave the waiting room with the assistance of smoke bombs proved unsuccessful. However, one Manchester NFer complains of a little 'chestiness' to this day!

GO.....

Four fascists arrived late in a shiny new Saab (Daddy's?), and on realising we weren't fascists they drove off at high speed. The car escaped but only to a set of red lights, whereupon anti-fascists turned the car upside down complete with occupants, and some kind soul threw in a smoke bomb for good measure!!

1986/87 - AFA set up an anti-fascist hot line to monitor racist attacks and fascist activity. AFA were also involved in defending Viraj Mendis who took sanctuary in a church after facing a deportation order. A number of attempted fascist attacks were nipped in the bud. On one occasion, St George's Day, a protest by 'English Nationalists' did not materialise after anti-fascists chanced upon the same pub they were meeting in. (We weren't tipped off, honestly.)

In another attempt Mr. Payne, BNP organiser, was contacted by 'an alleged sympathiser' who offered him information that the BNP required. Payne poured forth the BNP plan to storm the church and seize Viraj Mendis, drag him out and chain him to a lamp post, where the police could arrest and deport him.

The exchanges were tape recorded and attempts were made to do follow up calls in the presence of the media. A further set of calls were made but Payne was nervous and non-committal. When challenged by the agent he admitted he'd been visited by the police, who had been made aware of the taped conversations by an 'anti-fascist journalist'!

The traditions and principals of militant anti-fascism are still firmly applied by Manchester AFA. Over the years we have proved that the fascists can be kicked off the streets and kept off by physical and ideological confrontation. It may be hard work but we can still 'always look on the bright side...!'

World in Action : Violence with Violence

It is very significant that at the time when the BNP have won their first council seat, will be actively contesting many more in the local elections in May, and racial violence continues to increase, that the best Granada TV's 'investigative' programme "World in Action" can come up with is a negative and reactionary attack on the anti-fascist movement. It would be interesting to know who suggested the programme and what they hoped to achieve.

Ironically the programme started quite forcefully with reconstructions of the murders of Rolan Adams, Rohit Duggal and Stephen Lawrence, which should have led into a discussion about how to specifically deal with racist and fascist violence, emphasising the need for different tactics to deal with this issue as opposed to, say, hospital closures.

The fact that the programme went on to attack anti-fascists shows just how far this country has moved to the right.

The attack takes place in two parts. The first part portrays the anti-fascist movement as unnecessary, unwanted, and unhelpful. Although the programme is an attack on the anti-fascist movement, it deals only with racism. It argues that racism can be dealt with by legislation and the police, although it promotes ARA's protest march through central London (October 16th) as a useful way of encouraging new anti-racist legislation. Anti-fascists, on the other hand, have nothing to offer the fight against racist violence, being themselves violent. The problem is presented as violence, whether from the Left or Right, rather than examining the motivation behind it or where it is directed.

The programme is telling people to have nothing to do with the anti-fascist movement. It talks of "subversive groups" making "war-like noises", of how the violence between demonstrators and police at the Unity march in south-east London (October 16th) was caused because "anti-nazism pushed anti-racism into the background". It is saying violence is inevitable on anti-fascist events, don't get involved, rather than who caused the violence (in this case the police had "predicted" trouble a full week before the march) or whether it achieved anything.

The families of victims of racist murders are used for further attacks, describing how various organisations have used them. This is an issue, but not the real point here. The purpose of anti-fascism must be to smash the organisations that promote and encourage racial attacks in the first place, rather than provide thousands of "extras" for the next funeral procession.

Once the softening up has been achieved in the first part, the programme moves on to its more sinister agenda - the militant wing of the anti-fascist movement and in particular AFA. Through its successes, AFA has shown that we have the power to make a difference - and that has more far-reaching consequences than just for the anti-fascist movement. If you look at the attempts to criminalise and isolate AFA, from a variety of sources, you can see that someone's cage has been rattled.

This programme presents AFA as a full-blown paramilitary conspiracy, with a "cell structure", members involved "with things they don't want people to know about" and "bent on sectarian confrontation." Sectarian confrontation? That sounds remarkably like the "sectarian violence" we so often hear about in the north of Ireland.

So there you have it - case proved. AFA is a "terrorist" organisation, which, funnily enough, is a catchy little slogan available on stickers from the BNP. Nice one, "World in Action", a serious contribution to the urgent debate on how to beat the fascists. Who's pulling your strings, eh?

"Bent on sectarian confrontation"?

Footnote 1.
Throughout the "AFA section", "World in Action" played footage of demonstrators attacking the police on the October 16th Unity march. By implication, this was AFA. London AFA did not support the march, for political reasons (covered elsewhere in this issue) and took no part in the scenes shown. But then, when you're running a good smear story, why let little details like the truth get in the way?

Footnote 2.
London AFA was invited to take part in the programme and did. The structure of AFA (federal) was explained to the programme makers, and the London AFA representative spoke on behalf of London AFA. Despite that, "World in Action" pulled a stunt to discredit him by contradicting what he said by showing a clip from Leeds. Just thought we'd mention it.

FIGHTING BACK TALK

Dear Fighting Talk,

Regarding the article "The BNP/Rangers Connection" (FT 6). We thought we'd respond this time. Is Anti-Fascist Action hell-bent on alienating all Rangers fans from anti-racist/non-sectarian views and driving them into the hands of the fascists?

What with this article as well as part of the "Open Space" programme (both of which are sensationalist and lacking in hard evidence, of which we'll touch on later; if you have it, print it.), it certainly seems so. We can only speculate that some people have a hidden agenda.

If "AFA members in Glasgow have been monitoring BNP activity at Ibrox for some years now", why haven't they done anything about it? We have been told that there are - or at least were? - some Rangers fans involved in or connected to Glasgow AFA. Why no "Rangers Anti-Fascists" stickers for instance? (And we'll stand corrected if some are in the process of being done). Surely an easy thing to do, given that there are stickers for numerous English clubs as well as Celtic. And if AFA is to be believed, that Rangers have a problem as big as is claimed, then shouldn't it be a priority?

Perhaps if a sticker campaign was carried out at Ibrox then AFA might receive a number of letters from sympathetic fans, similar to what happened at Chelsea. Isn't that what AFA wants, and what is there to lose? (No, we're not suggesting that will be enough to get rid of the BNP at Ibrox).

Let's get things into proper perspective. Rangers have around 30,000 season ticket holders and average gates of around 40,000 (second only to Man. Utd). What exactly is the real influence of the BNP amongst such a large number of fans? They "have an influence that goes beyond their numbers." In what way? Could we have some facts? "They lead a gang of thugs." They may do. "Rangers ICF", we got told after the Sunderland game, number around 70. Out of 40,000. (Incidentally, Rangers ICF is not a new hooligan mob, they've been going for around 10 years). "Regular paper sales ... a source of further recruits" How many? Roughly: dozens? hundreds?

Yes, Rangers fans sing "Billy Boys" and, occasionally, "Rule Britannia". They've been doing it for many years more than the BNP's existence. Ironically, when we went to see Hibernian v Rangers at Easter Road, always a high tension game for both sets of fans, we didn't hear "Rule Britannia" once. There was a group of kids in the Rangers 'end' taunting the Hibs fans singing "Hello, we are the Billy Boys" - that 'Fascist' anthem - and numbering about 20 or so. All of them Asian (we kid you not). At the recent Cup Final between the two teams, if there was a BNP presence then it must have been equally as 'influential'.

The photo of "Rangers fans on the march" wouldn't have stood up in any court case. Maybe they are Rangers fans, but how can you tell? The only football top we could recognise was a Chelsea away top (third from left at the front, behind the person with the striped top).

Unfortunately, AFA displayed similar disputable 'evidence' in it's "Open Space" programme last year, which devoted a reasonable amount of time to the BNP-Rangers connection. No visible evidence, no pictures or film of BNP members outside Ibrox, no attempt to contact the club for their views, just a lingering shot of some fans (half a dozen or so) with a Union Jack bearing the words "Derry Thugs".

Perhaps this may well have been a shock to AFA members and viewers in England, but to so many fans in Scotland it would have been a case of "So, what's new?"

We have no doubt that the BNP are trying to recruit from Rangers fans and Loyalists. We do question the effect they are actually having and the way AFA is reporting it (you don't actually believe everything the BNP say do you?) and are in the process of making our own enquiries.

While most Rangers fans no doubt would describe themselves as "Loyalists", that does not mean they are politically active as such. In fact it is obvious that the vast majority are not. Similarly, while many Celtic fans would describe themselves as Republican supporters, all but a small minority do no more than sing songs and wave tricolours on a Saturday afternoon (with a fair amount of fans being equally bigoted, with their anti-Protestant/pro-catholic "God Bless the Pope" attitude). Glasgow, however, is not Belfast, no matter how some seem to wish it was.

At the start of the letter we asked the question whether AFA was seeking to alienate Rangers fans. If the answer is 'no' then why describe a Loyalist as a "local fascist" ? We certainly have no "Loyalty" to the "Crown" or the "Union", but many do unfortunately and not just in Glasgow or parts of Ireland. Is someone who stands up to "God Save the Queen" in the local British Legion Club really to be condemned as a "Fascist" ? We question the motives of the person/s who wrote that.

Loyalism, not just Ulster Loyalism, is a problem for socialists of all persuasions, and certainly those who are militantly loyal to the Crown would no doubt act in a "fascistic" was if there was any serious threat to the status quo (as in Northern Ireland). The only answer to that in the present is to promote working class unity and class war, which by their nature are "unloyal".

If it is too late for this in the six counties it certainly isn't on this side of the water. We should be trying to distance the fascists (and isolate them) from the Loyalists, not pushing them closer together. In London, the BNP target white working class people in areas where racism is rife. AFA states that they too will fight for the hearts and minds of the same people (quite rightly) and condemn the "left" for abandoning them.

Unfortunately, if AFA continues to publish articles such as these (and as it wasn't signed it could be seen as being endorsed by AFA - is it?) you will be guilty of doing

the same to the thousands of Rangers fans who are misguidedly "Loyal" but are certainly not "Fascists", local or otherwise.

Towards the end of the article it is stated that "the need to respond to the fascist threat at Ibrox has never been greater." Doesn't that pose the question: what, and with whom (the "strongly - (ha!) - anti-fascist Celtic support"?) are you going to do about it? It must surely be obvious that the best way to get the fascists away from Ibrox is with the involvement of Rangers fans? We won't repeat the previous paragraph.

A Hibernian supporter and a Rangers supporter, anti-fascists, SE London.

FIGHTING TALK REPLIES:

As far as your criticisms of Glasgow AFA are concerned, I don't see anywhere in your letter that you have made any moves/are putting forward any suggestions on your own part on this question. What stickers have you produced?, what have you done?, as an anti-fascist Rangers fan surely you have a role to play in the building of resistance to fascists at Rangers, or is that all down to us? For our part, we are sure that our people in Glasgow are doing their job as well as they can, AFA doesn't have unlimited resources or an unlimited money supply, maybe you might like to organise a benefit or raise some money to send up to Glasgow so that they might produce some stickers?

As far as circumstances at Rangers are concerned, I know that at Chelsea, a club with a similar reputation for fascist elements and a fascist led hooligan firm the influence is very real. It may not be much to the contemporaries of those characters, a lot of whom at Rangers as well as at Chelsea, would regard these outfits with contempt. The younger fans, the more impressionable, well that's a different matter.

Surely if there is a pool of support, a place where they are picking people up, we should inform people? In your terms AFA shouldn't highlight fascist growth in the East End, or South East London for fear we might cause offence to local cockneys!

What's so good about Rangers singing Rule Britannia before the BNP? Surely all that proves is that they both have the same appalling taste in music, but 'Rangers sung it first'. And as far as Asians kids singing the 'Billy Boys', maybe if AFA doesn't continue exposing the roots of that song the next generation will be singing fascist anthems as well. (We kid you not). As for the picture, "stand up in court"?, like it or not they're Rangers fans.

What's important for Fighting Talk is that it covers the areas that AFA is working in/ targeting, if someone wants to write about the situation at other clubs then we'll print that too. It's not for want of asking on our part that we've not had input from people at other clubs . All that's needed is somebody to do the work. People are attempting to do that work in Scotland, to their credit. Maybe if you criticised the fact that Rangers have been covered over and above other sides then there would be validity in that. But to suggest hidden agendas against Rangers per se, is to display something of a prima donna attitude to the coverage.

Do you really believe that Loyalism is just about standing up in the British Legion to the national anthem? You obviously don't because in the next paragraph you seem to acknowledge that Loyalists are for the Status Quo and might act in a 'fascistic' way if pressed. In other words Loyalism is an anti-working class, reactionary phenomenon, a statement consistent with the 'Loyalism and Fascism' article (FT issue 4) which you are seemingly questioning? The attitude to Loyalism, which was expressed in that article, is something that a working class anti-fascist should find hard to disagree with:
"The majority of Protestants are not Loyalists, and have little interest in Loyalism. Therefore, anti-fascists have to find ways whereby we can divide the Loyalists and fascists from those that they regard as their constituency."
ie: the Protestant working class people that are under the influence, which directly contradicts your assertion that we are rejecting a section of the working class out of hand. It is your letter, not our article that says that the "majority of Rangers fans would describe themselves as Loyalists", if that is true, and as you have asserted Loyalists are anti-working class reactionaries, then it would seem that the BNP have indeed chosen a cosy little nest for themselves at Ibrox. However, AFA believes that progressive ideas need to be advocated, that working class people need to challenge the reactionaries in our midst, whether they be fascists, or advocates of it's country cousin 'Loyalism'.

The way in which to challenge fascism for AFA is clear, direct ideological and physical confrontation. Maybe Loyalism is another issue. The point in AFA highlighting the issue is so that AFA itself, and the wider working class movement, is forced to address the issue, to discuss and to deal with the question of the definite (and we hope you're not denying <u>this</u>) links between the fascists and the Loyalists. Ignoring the issue is not only just a "don't rock the boat" attitude, in the long term it could prove a deadly one.

Illustration from the July 1993 issue of British Patriot

Just off down the Legion for a swift half!!?

NEWS FROM GREECE

Dear Fighting Talk,

As far as fascism and anti-fascism in Greece - it's quite a vast subject. I"ll try to give you an idea.

These last three years nationalistic and xenophobic ideas have known an unprecedented rise in Greece due to reasons related to the break up of the postwar status quo in the Balkans. The main issue has been the Greek opposition to the independence of the former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia.

In order to achieve easy political gains, all major Greek parties have put forward extreme nationalistic views on the subject and instigated hysterical jingoistic attitudes among the people - graphically displayed in the two giant anti-Macedonian demonstrations (one in Salonica, one in Athens) which sent hundreds of thousands in the streets in a fit of nationalistic rage.

Nationalism and its ideological by-products (the emergence of the Greek Orthodox Church as a political force to be reckoned with, militant pro-Serbianism, a new invigorated anti-Europeanism, creeping paranoia as shown in persisting arguments of Papal/ EEC/Muslim/Turkish/German etc etc anti-Greece conspiracy theories, rampant xenophobia) have completely dominated Greek society.

At the same time, the collapse of the Albanian commie regime sent thousands of destitute Albanian workers into Greece ... so Greeks discovered their own "niggers" and the media a token scapegoat. In this context it is not surprising that Greek fascists found a fertile ground for their preachings.

However, should you ask me if they reaped maximum dividends, I'd say no ... this seems paradoxical at first but in Greece extreme jingoism and xenophobia are sponsored by the official mainstream parties, so neo-nazis are left with little room for manoeuvring. For instance, in the Athens anti-Macedonian demo, "Golden Dawn" neo-nazis were quite conspicuous but were met with hostility by their fellow nationalists.

Having said that, though, I have to add there's an increase in street level fascist activity especially targetted against foreign workers, black students, anarchists and trots. However, it should be added that compared to police violence against immigrants, neo-nazi

violence is negligible ... the number of Albanian "illegal" immigrants shot dead by the police, the National Guard or even ordinary people during the last two years is terrifying and even more terrifying is the fact that no one seems to give a damn about it.

The most active Fascist groups these last two years have been:
"Greek Crusade", a very small group led by an ex-Nea Democratia MP, they claim to be "patriotic", anti-semitic and anti-nazi, a bit like some slav fascist groups.

"O.E.N. Great Alexander": a small group of thugs (around 100) led by a man carrying numerous convictions for illegal sex shows and other such stuff. They claim to be hardline Greek nationalists, so they don't always mix too well with Greek nazis. They gained publicity when they bashed two members of the Macedonian minority of Greece who were standing trial in Athens. They've also been involved in several attacks on black people and anti-fascists.

Last but not least, there's "Golden Dawn", an openly nazi groups that has been around since the early 80's. They are by far the most active of the lot with frequent attacks on anarchists, foreigners etc. These last few years they've stepped up their recruiting campaign especially aimed at high schools. During the aforementioned anti-Macedonian demo, "Golden Dawn" attacked the Athens Uni and an anarchist squat, but as I said their display of swastikas put off the nationalist Joe Public. However, there is evidence they are on the up and up.

There are no militant anti-fascist groups in Greece, but that doesn't mean there's no anti-fascist action - it's carried out mainly by anarchist and punk blocks. These past two years anti-fascist action included among others the breaking up of a fascist civil war remembrance day, when both nazis and the police were taken completely by surprise (fascist MPs chased by baton-wielding punks, a sight to be seen), a raid on an Athens fascist TV station that caused major damage, a rally at the Court House that prevented fascists from repeating their attack on the aforementioned Macedonians during the appeal hearing, as well as numerous confrontations on the streets.

Greeks used to pride themselves they had no prejudices against black people, but I think that was because there were no blacks around. When it comes down to Gypsies, Turks, Albanians, Bulgarians, Jews, Macedonians, Catholics, Muslims ... that's another story.

A Greek anti-fascist.

FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

The fight against fascism has many fronts. The need to reach a wider audience with the anti-fascist message has never been greater. AFA has always used music and cultural events as part of the fight, with Cable Street Beat and the Unity Carnival, and "Freedom of Movement" is in this tradition.

"Freedom of Movement" is a campaign to politicise the previously apathetic dance club scene, raising issues of racism and fascism. Set up by members of Manchester AFA and DJs from Manchester clubs, "Freedom of Movement" aims to raise awareness of fascism and encourage people at least to identify with the anti-fascist cause and get active!

"Freedom of Movement" as a title arose out of the idea that the largely unpolitical dance club scene is one where black and white, and gay and straight people mix and enjoy themselves together. As Justin Robertson (DJ involved with "Freedom of Movement") says, house is such a multicultural movement that it just seems quite an appropriate place to fight racism.

Under the divisive hate politics of fascism, such a vibrant and multiracial scene could not exist. Fascism is a threat to such a dance scene - a BNP controlled council would not tolerate it, so when the BNP won their first council seat in Millwall and the confidence of its members increased around the country, the impetus for "Freedom of Movement" was there!

To achieve its aims "Freedom of Movement" is organising a series of benefits up and down the country. Recently it has staged successful events in Manchester, Edinburgh and Nottingham.

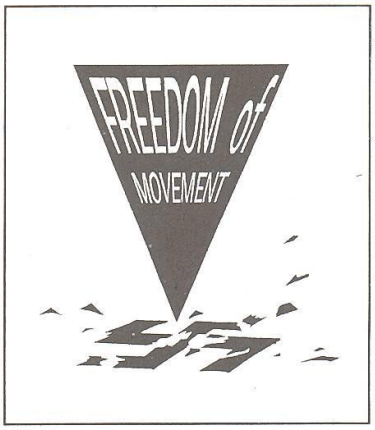
The Manchester benefit, on 8th December at "Home" nightclub was a success, despite the gale force winds and sheeting rain, with over 600 punters paying in. Club goers were treated to a top line-up of DJs including Justin Robertson, Luvdup, Norman Jay and the Flesh DJs.

The following night, the 9th December, at the Venue, Edinburgh, was also a storming success. The AFA stall was busy all night, selling merchandise, together with people wanting to join AFA, and the club itself was heaving, crammed full of 600 stomping clubgoers. Those who "survived" the frantic atmosphere went home with the sounds of Justin Robertson, Slam and the Drum Club ringing in their ears.

As a result of these events, "Freedom of Movement" has raised a substantial amount of money. This year, "Freedom of Movement" is intending to release a benefit album, a New Fast Daffodils reworking of Consolidated's "This is Fascism ..", which will be remixed by a number of DJs and musicians. Future events to be arranged include benefits under the "Freedom of Movement" Tour in Leeds, Liverpool, Nottingham and London.

There needs to be a reaction against the resurgence of the extreme right in this country and across Europe. In the 1970s musicians politicised the music scene with Rock Against Racism. As yet, the 1990s music and dance scene has remained unpolitical and largely apathetic. "Freedom of Movement", aligned to Anti-Fascist Action, is an attempt to raise the issue of racism and fascism with the support of those in the music industry.

If DJs, musicians, performing artists or AFA groups wish to be involved in "Freedom of Movement", contact Manchester AFA, PO Box 83, SWDO, Manchester M15 5NJ



ANTI FASCIST ACTION IN THE AREA

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BNP

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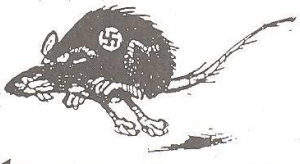

PO BOX 83, SWDO, MANCHESTER, M15 5NA

smash Anti FASCIST ACTION fascism

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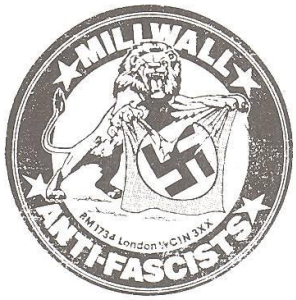
GEORDIES ARE BLACK AND WHITE

MILLWALL ANTI-FASCISTS



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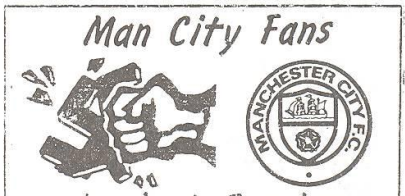

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ANTI-FASCIST ACTION

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